

25. MONTAGUE'S HARRIER. (*Circus cineraceus*.)

Less common than the last species, but not rare in Epirus in winter. The great marsh of Livitazza is a favourite haunt of this Harrier.

[To be continued.]

II.—*On Birds collected or observed in the Republic of Honduras, with a short Account of a Journey across that country from the Pacific to the Atlantic Ocean.* By GEORGE CAVENDISH TAYLOR, F.R.G.S.

I PURPOSE giving some account of the birds collected or observed during a journey across the Central American Isthmus, from Fonseca Bay, on the Pacific Ocean, to Omoa, on the Atlantic, made in the winter of 1857-8, in company with Lieut.-Colonel Stanton, C.B., of the Royal Engineers, Mr. Amory Edwards, of New York, and others.

But before entering into a detailed account of the birds met with, I think it will be advisable to give such a description of our route, and of the country passed through, as may serve to render intelligible many allusions made in the subsequent notes. On meeting Colonel Stanton in New York, he informed me that he was going, under the direction of the Foreign Office, to Honduras, to report upon the feasibility of a scheme for constructing a railroad between the Gulf of Fonseca, on the Pacific, and Porto Caballos, on the Atlantic. To assist in the survey, three Sappers of the Royal Engineer Corps had been sent with him, one of whom was Corporal Church, lately returned, in company with Dr. Barth, from Kuka and Lake Tchad in Central Africa. Church carried a photographic apparatus with him, and made a large collection of photographs during our progress through the country.

Mr. Amory Edwards was connected with the promoters of the railroad, and having been previously in Honduras, and speaking Spanish fluently, was of the greatest service in carrying out the objects of the expedition. I hardly know how we should have got on without him. He was also of great assistance to me in my ornithological researches, as he had a taste for natural his-

tory, and during his former residence in Honduras had made a considerable collection of birds.

Colonel Stanton proposed to me to accompany him, and as so favourable an opportunity of visiting a little-known country was rarely to be met with, I immediately accepted the offer.

We left New York by different routes. Mr. Edwards and the Sappers went by sea. Colonel Stanton and I descended the Mississippi to New Orleans, and joined the former at Havana, whence we proceeded to Aspinwall. At Havana I first observed the Frigate Pelican (*Fregata aquila*). We crossed the Isthmus from Aspinwall to Panama by the railroad. The line passes through some of the finest forest scenery I have met with during my stay in the tropics. I there saw Parrots, Macaws, and Humming-birds in a state of nature. The jungle grows close up to the edge of the railroad, and the trees often overhang the line. Wherever the train stopped, I observed Humming-birds among the flowers and trees. Monkeys are abundant in the forests; but I was told that since the line was opened they seldom showed themselves in its vicinity, being, no doubt, alarmed by the noise of the trains.

The day after our arrival at Panama we sailed in the screw-steamer 'Columbus' for La Union, in the Gulf of Fonseca, where we were to land. The voyage occupied the best part of six days. We stopped at Punta Arenas, at San Juan del Sur, and Realejo. At the first-mentioned place we were delayed fully twenty-four hours. At each place I went ashore, and did not fail to see Doves, Macaws, Parakeets, Anis (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*), Cuckoos (*Piaya*), and various others of the common species inhabiting Central America. The sea was uniformly calm during our voyage. I observed a great number of Yellow Snakes*, about 3 feet long, basking on the surface of the water. I also saw some Flying Fishes (*Exocoetus*). On our voyage from Havana to Aspinwall the latter were very numerous. Large numbers of them would rise from the water near the bows of the ship and scatter themselves in all directions.

* All the Sea-snakes at present known to science are confined to the Eastern seas. It would be very desirable to procure specimens of these Western Sea-snakes, as they would doubtless be of new species, and probably of a different form from the *Hydrophiidæ* of the East.—ED.

It does not appear to me, after much observation, that these animals have the power of turning in the air, but that they can only fly in a direct line, unless they happen to assume a new direction, by ricocheting from the edge of a wave.

The 'Columbus' passed between Quibo Island and a smaller island, further to seaward, which, the captain informed me, is chiefly inhabited by Monkeys and Peccaries.

The Gulf of Fonseca is a fine sheet of water; it is studded with volcanic islands, densely covered with wood to their very tops. About sunset, on the 23rd of December, we arrived at La Union, and disembarked immediately. We remained there only three days, and crossed on the 26th to the island of Tigre in a boat. La Union is, no doubt, a good locality for bird-collecting; it is built at the foot of the mountain of Conchagua, formerly a volcano. Mr. Hardcastle, an Englishman residing in New York, who was a fellow-passenger with us in the 'Columbus,' and who subsequently travelled extensively in Central America, ascended the mountain and saw quantities of monkeys. The ascent is easy and may be performed on mules. I was sorry to be unable to go, the more so as he had a splendid view of the surrounding country.

We remained twelve days in Tigre Island, and during that time lived in a deserted house on the sea-shore, which was full of the nests of multitudes of red wasps. These, however, caused little annoyance beyond their constant presence. The Sappers lived in another house at the edge of the jungle; it abounded (rather too much to please me) with scorpions and large hairy spiders (*Mygale*). Not a day passed that the Sappers did not kill some of these monsters. On one occasion I saw a large spider 3 or 4 inches in diameter driven from under some furniture and killed with a sword!

Tigre Island is a volcanic mountain, and densely wooded, except a small bare space at the summit. I did not go up, as one cannot ride, and walking up a mountain in this climate and through dense bush is not to be thought of. I used to get many birds near an old crater, now a lagoon, full of long reeds and floating grass, to which they resorted to drink, morning and evening.

Tigre Island was not a good place for bird-collecting, as the bush was too dense, and the walking very bad. Several other islands were not far off, where, no doubt, much might have been done; but, except the visit* to the island frequented by the Frigate-birds (*Fregata*), my excursions were confined to near home, as boats were not easily obtained; and, moreover, I had as much to occupy me there, during the time I remained, as I could well get through. One cannot do so much in a hot climate as in a cool one. Energy diminishes with heat and loss of strength, and one feels inclined to take things easy, finding that lying in a hammock during the heat of the day is a pleasanter occupation than skinning birds. However, I was generally out soon after break of day, and again in the evening. Another great drawback are the ticks and *Agarrapatas*, about which I shall presently say more. A large island opposite to Tigre, called 'Saccate Grande,' is reputed to be full of Jaguars (*Felis onca*). They do much damage among the cattle. The usual mode of hunting them is to use dogs, which drive the jaguars to tree, when they are easily shot. It was proposed that we should devote a day or two to hunting them, but, owing to circumstances over which I had no control, the scheme was necessarily abandoned.

We left Tigre on the 9th of January, and went by boat to La Brea, some fifteen miles. There we took mules, and having crossed an open plain to Nacaome, halted for the night. Next day we rode to Langui. On the way I saw Deer cross the path, and Rabbits (*Lepus*), to all appearance much resembling English Rabbits (*Lepus cuniculus*). The country about Langui is rolling, and not much encumbered with trees.

The next day we went through Aremecina to Caridad, and the day following to San Juan. The day after that, we reached Lamani, at the southern extremity of the plain of Comayagua. After leaving Aremecina, where we began to get into the mountains, until we reached the plain of Comayagua, I saw but few birds. Upon one occasion, when high up, a fine deer crossed the road about a hundred yards before me; and on another occasion, while halting for breakfast, I went out with

* For an account of this, see vol. i. (1859) p. 150.

a gun, and saw a black animal, about the size of a fox, with a bushy tail*, jump out of a patch of sugar-cane, just out of gunshot. Among the pine ridges on the summit, 3000 feet above the sea, I observed very few birds, except a covey of small Partridges (*Ortyx*). These, by the way, I used frequently to see, but was not able to obtain, as they generally frequented thick bushes, and were difficult to find and raise. With the aid of a good dog, I have no doubt that I might have shot some, and other game as well. We had with us a dog called 'Dash,' miscalled a setter, which Mr. Edwards had brought with him from New York; his accomplishments, however, extended no further than barking, or scratching at the innumerable fleas and ticks which infested him. So useless was he, that we left him at Comayagua when we started for the Atlantic coast.

I should have obtained many more birds, but our journey was so unnecessarily hurried, that I could shoot only a few of such as I saw close to the roadside. Skinning them was out of the question. It was as much as I could do to take a brief description of the few I killed, and the halting-places were so wretchedly bad, that it was often with difficulty I did that. I saw many birds which I did not shoot, because I knew that I could not turn them to account, either by describing or skinning them. By proceeding leisurely, I should have had many more opportunities of procuring specimens. I might also have got birds at La Union, and have considerably increased my collection of *Grallatores* along the estuaries in the Gulf of Fonseca, if I could have remained longer on the Pacific coast.

We remained a night at Lamani, and rode the next day into Comayagua, over the plain, which is tolerably level, open in places, but mostly covered with forest. The day after our arrival I was taken ill with fever and ague, and was not able to go about for ten days. As we only remained seventeen days at Comayagua, I lost thereby much valuable time, and when I was able to go out, my excursions were considerably curtailed by debility resulting from the fever. There is much to be done about Comayagua. The vicinity of the town consists of open level plain with cactus-bushes on one side, dense jungle intersected by rivers

* Perhaps an Anteater (*Myrmecophaga*).

and a rugged wooded country on the other. There are also swamps in the jungle in the rainy season. At the edge of the town are numerous orange-gardens. The plain of Comayagua is bounded by high mountains covered with trees. It was in these mountains that Mr. Edwards saw the tail-feathers of the Quesal (*Pharomacrus paradiseus*).

On the 1st of February we started for the Atlantic coast. Instead of going by the most direct route, we decided to make a detour by the Lake of Yojoa, hitherto unknown to Europeans, and undescribed. Our first march was to Opoteca, where we remained the whole of the following day. The country about Opoteca is exceedingly mountainous, all up- and down-hill—so much so, that I could do nothing in such very hot weather. On the third day we rode to Siquatepeque. Our route lay over the tops of some of the highest mountains in the neighbourhood, 5000 feet above the sea-level. The vegetation consisted chiefly of long grass and pines. I saw nothing here but Blue Birds (*Sialia wilsoni*) and Crows (*Corvus*). Siquatepeque is situated in a beautiful open plain eight or ten miles long, 3600 feet above the sea-level, and surrounded by mountains. Here I shot several fresh birds, and would willingly have remained some days, but the morning following we proceeded on our journey to Taulevi. The country passed through was principally undulating ground, covered, not too thickly, with pine trees, and having a very park-like appearance. Before reaching Taulevi we had to descend, by a zigzag path, the face of a high and very steep hill. Shortly after leaving Siquatepeque, I saw some Deer escape from a large plantain-patch in a hollow. During the day I obtained nine new species of birds. We remained a whole day at Taulevi. It is picturesquely situated in a hollow in the mountains, closely surrounded by dense vegetation, and is, I should think, an unhealthy locality. Our delay there was in order to make necessary arrangements for our journey the next day to the Lake of Yojoa, the route to which lay through dense forest, and was seldom travelled. An essential part of these arrangements consisted in sending forward men to clear a path through the forest, and to engage boats for our passage down the lake. In the evening we sent out some boys to catch an Armadillo (*Dasypus*), which

animals are plentiful thereabouts. Next morning they returned, bringing one (*Dasyppus novem-cinctus**?) alive in a net. We ordered it to be shelled, and dressed for cooking, and took it along with us. It was covered with a layer of fat fully an inch thick. At a tolerably early hour next day we started for the Lake of Yojoa, some three leagues distant, but in difficulty of transit fully equal to double the distance. For some way our route lay through open savannahs and across wooded hollows. It was in many places overgrown with bush, and consequently we were well covered with *Agarrapatas* before we had been long out. We then crossed a broad and rapid stream and entered a dense forest, through which the path, owing to disuse, had become almost obliterated. It was obstructed by fallen trees of all sizes, and the young vegetation had grown over them. If we had not sent forward a party to clear the way, we should never have got through. The men had *cut* a way through the forest. Owing to the number of fallen trees, the mud-holes, being sheltered from the sun, had not dried up. To avoid these, they had been frequently compelled to deviate from the old path and open a fresh one. Everywhere the track was full of the stumps of the young trees which had been cut away. However, the mules got well through it, and the baggage followed, greatly to my surprise. The forest was full of large and lofty trees, many of them Mahoganies (*Swietenia*). Most of the large trees had those buttresses at the base, which are so remarkable in tropical forest scenery. The underbrush was not very thick, but still too much so to make walking in the forest pleasant work.

After a ride of some hours we emerged into a small clearing with a few huts upon it, about half a mile distant from a river flowing from the lake, where we were to embark in canoes. It was an unhealthy and unpleasant locality, abounding in malaria and mosquitoes, so we were anxious to remain as short a time as possible. About half an hour before sunset we moved down on the mules to the bank of the river. The track was through one deep and continuous mud-hole. The whole party assembled

* Lichtenstein says that the Armadillo of Mexico is perfectly identical with the South American *Dasyppus novem-cinctus* (Abh. Akad. Berlin, 1827, p. 101).—Ed.

on the bank. A fire was lighted; and we made a hurried meal on tea and armadillo. The flesh looked and tasted much like that of a young pig. Edwards was loud in its praise; but I did not eat much, as it was too fat and rich. I do not want to accuse any animal without good cause; but I was quite well when I ate it, and for two days afterwards was unwell, and had to take a strong dose of medicine to remove a bilious attack. This might have been occasioned by lying out all night in a canoe; but I think the armadillo is as likely, or more so, to have been the cause.

It was nearly dark when we embarked. The river flowed out of the lake, which was perhaps a couple of miles distant. There was very little current in it. The water was deep and still, and had a very *alligatory* appearance. The banks were covered with dense forest and lofty trees, which completely overhung and overshadowed the river. In our way we disturbed numbers of Night Herons, whose cries, added to the croaking of innumerable frogs, made no inconsiderable noise. Every bush and bough contained fireflies; and the scenery was tropical in the extreme. I should have much liked to go along this river by daylight; it was evidently good bird-ground. The shores of the lake are covered with floating reeds; and, the wind being ahead, and occasionally too strong for us to proceed, we made fast to them until it lulled again. We had only some twelve miles to go, and by early dawn had arrived at our destination. While our luggage was being disembarked, I went off in a canoe, with Corporal Church, after some Ducks (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) which I saw among the reeds. As they were not used to being shot at, they were not wild, and at the first shot I picked up three; a second discharge produced two. I was within easy distance of several of them, sitting well together, with their heads up, and had calculated on four or five at least, when, owing to the exceeding dampness of the air (for the fog had not yet cleared off), my gun missed fire. They had by this time become more wary; so, as the morning felt very *aguish*, and I was tired and hungry, I went in.

We remained two days at the Lake of Yojoa, putting up at a hacienda situated a few hundred yards from the edge of the

water, called 'Agua azul' or 'Blue water,' from a large spring of deep blue tint which rises a short distance behind the house and flows into the lake. In one place it forms a deep basin surrounded by thick grass and water-plants, which float on the surface of the water. The people at the hacienda told us that it was full of alligators, and that they came ashore daily to bask in the sun. Accordingly, as soon as the sun was high enough, we went down with gun and rifle loaded, and saw an alligator 12 or 15 feet long, lying on the bank at the edge of the water. We were perhaps eighty yards away, and could not approach nearer. Col. Stanton fired at him, and, I think, missed, as I did not hear the *thud* made by a ball striking its object. The alligator, however, plunged in at once among the floating grass, and we saw no more of him. He moved so quickly that I had not time to fire my gun. Either the same or other alligators * came out again several times during the day, on to the same bank, and again the day following; and several shots were fired at them, but without any evidence of success.

Every tree and blade of grass near the hacienda swarmed with *agarrapatas*. We could not go twenty yards without catching these tartars. They were more numerous here than in any other place where I have been before or since. There were a great number of cattle about; and the number of *agarrapatas* is corroborative of the assertion that they most abound where there are cattle.

Next day I went out in a canoe to shoot among the reeds on the lake, taking with me Nicazio, our rascally bad cook, to paddle. It was the only sort of sport that could be followed without danger of *agarrapatas*. Owing to the villainous paddling of Nicazio, whose performances afloat were even worse than his cooking, I was not very successful. I saw several different species of Ducks in considerable numbers, Anhingas (*Plotus*), and Cormorants; also plenty of Coots (*Fulica*), Gallinules, and Jacanas (*Parra*) in dozens. There were likewise various kinds of Herons (*Ardeidae*). I also saw some alligators floating with their heads

* The Alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*) being only found in North America, the animal referred to here is probably a Crocodile (*Crocodilus americanus*).—ED.

raised above the surface, like the head of a dog when swimming ; but they sank before the canoe got near them. The reeds and grass were frequently growing in a great depth of water, in many places twenty feet at the very least ; and our passage was often obstructed by mud-banks, as well as by the thick growth of lilies and other water-plants.

The lake is surrounded by high mountains, and the scenery is beautiful. Much in the way of ornithology might have been done there, with good health and fewer agarrapatas ; but I was forced to proceed in company with my party. Leaving the lake, our first day's march was to the town of Yojoa, principally over savannahs and open ground. From Yojoa we proceeded to Potrerillos, an unhealthy locality, enclosed by lofty hills, which shut out the breezes and prevent the necessary ventilation of the town. From the neighbourhood of Yojoa to the Atlantic, palm-trees and bamboos were common in the forests ; and our route frequently lay for miles together through long vistas of them, where we were completely shaded from the sun by their feathery branches, which drooped over the path and had a most picturesque effect. Although the shade was pleasant, it was productive of some inconvenience ; for, as the rays of the sun could not penetrate, the track was in these spots obstructed by deep mud-holes which never dry up. Between Yojoa and San Pedro we halted for the night at a hacienda by the roadside. I have every reason to remember it well ; for, while I was asleep, one of the women there thought fit to drink a quantity of a solution of corrosive sublimate in spirits of wine, which I kept for my bird-skins, under the impression that it was *aguardiente*. She fortunately drank too much, and vomited it up again ; or nothing we had at hand could have saved her. As it was, she had a narrow escape from death, and was exceedingly ill in consequence, and still more frightened than hurt.

Near San Pedro I saw Monkeys for the first and only time in Central America. There were not many of them ; but the sappers, who were riding a little ahead of us, saw forty or fifty together ; they were of a large size, brown, with white faces and long tails. Soon after leaving San Pedro we crossed a high range of mountains, and arrived at Omoa on the 14th of Feb-

ruary. As it was Colonel Stanton's intention to remain on the Atlantic coast only a few days, and to return to La Union by the most direct route and with few stoppages, I did not consider that it was worth my while to go twice over the same ground, especially as in such rapid travelling I could do but little in bird-collecting. Accordingly as soon as I arrived in Omoa I engaged a schooner, and sailed the same night for Belize, to be in time for the monthly departure of the mail steamer to Jamaica.

I should much have liked to remain some time longer in Honduras, and especially to have gone to Porto Caballos, the proposed Atlantic terminus of the Interoceanic line, where Waders and Water-birds were said to be plentiful; but a month would have been too long for me to remain on the Atlantic coast after my friends had left; and to return to the Pacific was out of the question. So I was forced to depart at once, and leave much undone, to my great regret. The passage to Belize occupied three days, as the winds were light and contrary. I saw no birds on the voyage, except a few Pelicans and Boobies.

During my stay in Honduras I only met with two Snakes: one was near Omoa. Mr. Edwards pointed it out, slowly winding up a bank close to the road; he said it was a Corral Snake and poisonous. It was small, and, as far as I could see through the thick vegetation, barred with yellow and black. The other was near the lagoon in Tigre Island; it darted into the water from under a decayed tree on which I stepped. Lizards and Iguanas were common, especially on the Pacific slope. The latter were often of large size; they would run up the trees like cats, and sit on the branches watching us. They are said to be good eating; but of course a good cook is indispensable, and ours was all but useless.

Monkeys I believe to be plentiful; but, as I have already mentioned, I only observed them once.

Jaguars (*Felis onca*) and Peccaries (*Dicotyles*) are common throughout the country; but I did not see any. One day, while riding through one of the palm forests on the Atlantic slope, a good-sized Tiger Cat crossed the path some distance ahead of my mule. I heard talk of Tapirs and Pumas. In such a

country as Honduras, where the population is scanty, where there are no roads besides mule-tracks, and where the forests are so dense and extensive, there may be any number of animals living unseen, unless they happen to cross or be near the track while the traveller is passing. Deer are not uncommon. I saw two kinds: one was small, of a pale fawn-colour; the other about the size of the North American Deer (*Cervus virginianus*), and of a dark colour, like a Roe-deer in its winter coat. Armadillos are abundant, but are rarely seen, as they lie underground in the daytime, burrowing like rabbits.

But although the passing traveller in Honduras does not see much animal life, he will feel its influence, to his ample annoyance. He will be bitten by fleas, lice, mosquitos, sand-flies, ants, jiggers, ticks, and *agarrapatas*. At Tigre, where we used to say that everything bit, we could not enter the sea without being attacked by small shrimp-like animals. Even the fishes persecuted us. When bathing in a small stream near San Pedro, hundreds of them, about the size of minnows, dashed at our legs, and caused such an irritation as to drive us out of the water. Standing on land, we suffered from the bites of numberless mosquitos until our clothes were hurried on again. As for the ants, their name is legion. I do not know whether they should be called buccaneers or filibusters; but they appropriate every thing they can get at, and locate themselves everywhere. They are wonderfully industrious in carrying out their predatory views, and display a great contrast to the inhabitants of Honduras, who do not know what industry means, and abhor continuous labour. There are two colours of ants—black and red—and a great variety of sizes. Some of the large black ones are half an inch long. Those in the houses are generally of the smaller sizes. Every tree and bush is infested with some kind or other of them. If you shoot a bird, and do not speedily pick it up, it will be covered with them. If you lay a bird down for a few minutes, beware how you take it up; for, if you do so incautiously, they will be on your hand in no time, and resent your claiming your own, by instant biting. They are most savage little wretches when interfered with or molested. Take care also how you sit down, either in the forest or anywhere out of

doors, or you may jump up again quicker than pleases you. The house we occupied at Comayagua was overrun by ants. They were constantly occupied in excavating the walls, and depositing the earth, in the shape of pills, in large heaps on the floor below. Nothing would stop them. Gunpowder was tried, and arsenic mixed with sugar was poured down their holes ; but to no purpose, still the mining went on. The tables and food were overrun, and the latter damaged by them. They got into tea, beer, wine, and every thing else that was left exposed. If a piece of bread, meat, or fruit was left on a table for an hour or so, they would find it out and would soon be seen, in a long stream, passing to and fro over the floor, and up the legs of the table. The only way we could keep our bread from them was by putting it in a basket suspended from a beam by a single string. I was obliged to do the same with the birds shot ; for if left on a shelf or table, the ants would quickly find them.

I have not been able to make out at what season the birds breed in Honduras. The Frigate Pelican was breeding on the 1st of January ; and on the Pacific Slope I found a few fresh nests of *Tyrannidæ*. I also noticed a pair of large hawks making a nest near Comayagua ; but these were the only instances observed. I saw no nests whatever on the Atlantic slope, although I was always on the look-out for them. But the density of the bush, the thorns, and the certainty of being covered with ants, ticks, and other ferocious insects upon attempting to penetrate it, restricted my researches in this particular. During my stay in the country, my constant attention was given to ornithology. I often sat up a great part of the night, to skin birds I had killed during the day.

Butterflies of every size and colour are innumerable in Honduras. Mr. Edwards always carried a net with him, and obtained many different species, some of them of great size and rare beauty. The ants used to commit great depredations upon his collections.

But ants, wasps, mosquitos, and indeed all these united, were not half so noisome as the ticks and agarrapatas. These may truly be considered the curse of the country. The ticks are about the size of the common dog-tick. They hold on tight to

the flesh and gorge themselves with blood, until swollen to the size of small peas, when they drop off.

The *agarrapatas**, which are of much more diminutive proportions, being not larger than grains of fine sand, attack one by hundreds, burrowing in the pores of the skin, and causing a most intolerable itching. We all suffered more or less from them; and many of us were covered with sores caused by their bites. I suffered more than others, from going so much more among the bushes. There is no escaping *agarrapatas*, even when riding along the mule-path. They are brushed from the bushes and grass which grow by the side of the road, on to the traveller's clothes, and soon work their way through to his skin. They are the greatest possible drawback to comfort, and considerably damp the energies of an ornithologist. Their annoyance might be considerably lessened, if, on coming in from the woods, it were possible to make a comfortable toilet, take a bath, and put on a fresh change of clothes. But, roughing it as I was, and often going to sleep in the clothes worn during the day, they completely destroyed my peace of mind and body. I have been told that they were first introduced and bred in the cattle; and they certainly were most numerous where cattle most abounded, as at Agua Azul. Edwards told me that they only abound during the dry season, and that, during his residence after I had left, as soon as the rains began they disappeared. I know, however, that in Jamaica I was covered with them on some of the wettest days I ever recollect; and Waterton says that the "*bête rouge*," which abounds in Demerara, and which is probably pretty much the same thing, is most plentiful in the rainy season. I leave the reader to reconcile these conflicting statements, and ask pardon for introducing such a subject in a magazine devoted to ornithology: but, in fact, birds and insects are inseparably connected in the tropics; whoever pursues the former is sure to meet with the latter, and will find that they create an interest far more deep and lasting than agreeable.

The dress I should recommend to a traveller going where these pests are found, is a pair of loose white linen trowsers, fastened tight round the ancles, so as to prevent them crawling

* The *agarrapata* is a small species of tick, of the genus *Ixodes*.—ED.

up the legs. The close texture of the linen prevents them creeping through, which they can easily do through the more open texture of cloth or flannel; and the white surface enables one to see them and brush them off.

A hip-jacket of linen is also desirable; and a "solar topee" is the best head-dress for a hot climate. For riding among agarapatas I should prefer boots with long *canvas* tops, to draw over the trowsers, and fasten above the knee. I hope these hints may be of use to any ornithologist contemplating an expedition to countries where these animals are met with. The health of a traveller much depends upon his comfort; and the bites of insects are often apt to bring on fever.

I did not see much of the fishes of Honduras. At Comayagua a native went out and *shot* a few for us, in the river, with a bow and arrow. At the Lake of Yojoa we caught some, about half a pound weight: they were excellent eating. Fonseca Bay is full of fish; but we had great difficulty in persuading the natives to go out and catch any, although we promised to pay them well for all they brought. The exertion was too great for the lazy rascals.

[To be continued.]

III.—On the Eggs of Two Raptorial Birds from the Falkland Islands. By PHILIP LUTLEY SCLATER.

(Plate I.)

FOR the accompanying plate, representing the eggs of two species of raptorial birds of which specimens have lately been received in England for the first time, we are indebted to the liberality of Mr. J. H. Gurney, who, as many of our readers know, loses no opportunity of diffusing knowledge concerning this Order of Birds, to which he has devoted so much attention.

In the 'Proceedings of the Zoological Society' for last year (1859, p. 93), is a paper by Mr. Gould on "Birds from the Falkland Islands, with descriptions of the eggs of some of the species, from specimens collected principally by Captain C. C. Abbot, of the Falkland Islands Detachment." The specimens